Request for Economic Stimulus Funds

Concept Proposal

Submitters (Name of Workgroup & Chair/Co-Chairs):
Technology and Networking - Al Lind, Chair
Public Access to the Internet at Public Libraries & Community Colleges Writing Team -
Charlene Davis, Team Captain

Project Title:
Public Access to the Internet at Public Libraries & Community Colleges

Project Partners (Known or Anticipated):
Kentucky Dept. for Libraries and Archives
KCTCS
Education and Workforce Development Cabinet
KY Adult Education
Council on Postsecondary Education
AT&T
Windstream
Cincinnati Bell Technical Solutions
Dell
Microsoft
Cisco

Project Background & Purpose (Justification for Project):
Public libraries are well positioned to play a greater role in providing access points to broadband services or people in both urban and rural areas and to families in need.

With this economic downturn, public libraries are being inundated with new customers. These folks have lost their jobs and need help. Most have no computer skills and need very basic assistance. Already strapped public library staff members are sitting down with them to help them get email addresses, complete unemployment forms, create resumes, look for job sites, complete online job applications along with a myriad of other issues. (I had a public library director tell me today that she had a customer dissolve into sobs as she asked to use the fax to send paperwork about the foreclosure on her home. The customer was three years away from having her house paid off and she had lost her job and her home.) The purpose is to help the public library staff help these customers. Then we need to help these customers get back to work by providing them with updated skill sets.

Making technology available in today's public libraries can help reduce the broadband access gap for families, while providing a wide range of information resources and services. Overall, the percentage of public libraries that provide free broadband Internet to patrons increased from 49% in 2002 to 65% in 2007, the most recent year available. In 2007, the percentage of libraries providing broadband Internet access in urban, suburban and rural areas was 91, 70 and 52%, respectively. Investments in library technology are helping communities that need it most. In 2007, 88% of public libraries in high poverty areas provided access to broadband Internet and 73% of public libraries reported their facilities as being the only source of free Internet access in their community.[1]

Project Description (General Goals & Implementation Strategies):
Today's librarians leverage an ever-widening range of resources to help patrons access health information, apply for jobs, find financial and government information and much more. We must ensure that public libraries can meet the ever increasing demand by their customers for public access computing.

One of the major drivers in creating technology strategies for public access computing is education. In a cooperative endeavor with the Kentucky Community and Technical Colleges and the Kentucky Department of Education, public libraries can play a pivotal role as a focal point in communities for access to higher education and education in general. This would be accomplished through the use of computing and network technology resources which may otherwise be out of reach for our citizens for economic reasons or because they have not yet understood the value and opportunity made available by the proper use of these resources. This would be accomplished through a variety of strategies:

- Broadband/I
- Laptops and appropriate software
- Classes taught by KCTCS and Kentucky Adult Education instructors directly to library customers on basic computer skills, MS Office, resume writing, job seeking skills, Internet basics.
- Classes taught by KCTCS instructors to library staff on how to train customers in basic computer skills, etc.

KCTCS Online (http://www.kctcs.edu/en/KCTCS_Online.aspx) has a CS 100 online class which is modular and can be started anytime 7x24. We could offer this to Library personnel and expand it to displaced workers who need to quickly pickup computer skills for job searching or new careers.

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[1] Source: Institute of Museum and Library Services

KY Virtual Adult Education (http://www.kyvae.org/Courses/Courses.asp?PID=150) provides adult students and educators with online courses, resources and services in an easy-to use and motivational format. The site is dedicated to helping adults achieve their educational goals through improving academic skills and/or earning a GED.

Subsequently, the public libraries will act as remediation providers along with their partners to help get these customers to back to work and to a point where they can move forward to the Community College system for additional training. The latter could be approached in number of ways from customers taking online classes at the public library (many do so already) to some college level classes actually being taught at the public library (if they have the meeting room space.) It should be noted that public libraries are already partnering with many satellite community colleges which have no libraries on site to support those students. These partnerships could be expanded.

Project Team (Project Manager(s), Content Experts, Instructional Designers, etc.):
Charlene Davis, Kentucky Dept. for Libraries and Archives
Rick Chlopan, KCTCS
Phil Duvall, KCTCS
Ann Riggs, Education and Workforce Development Cabinet
Brent Jones, Morehead State University
Dr. Jay Box, KCTCS
KY Adult Education

Project Budget & Amount of Economic Stimulus Funds Requested:

**Broadband for Public Libraries
Estimated Budget**

# of Locations	186
Hardware - Circuit Cost @$5000/unit	$ 1,860,000
Telecom Monthly Circuit Charge	$ 651,000
ISP Services Cost @$1000/mo	$ 186,000
Additional Hardware Requirements	$ 1,000,000
Vendor additional requirements	$ 4,650.00
Professional Services	$ 312,000
VDI Laptop Environment @1000 units	$ 1,950,000
Wireless Infrastructure	$ 930,000

Summary	
One Time Expenditures	$ 6,056,650
Telecom Operating (60 months)	$ 50,220,000
Wireless Operating (60 months)	$ 200,000
Subtotals	$ 56,476,650

Total Request	$ 56,476,650

The new tools and initiatives in this space I think make this attractive and may make this more innovative and perhaps attract funding. The biggest expense to libraries (and those managing computer labs) is keeping them secure, managing licenses, and other related tasks. A centralized VDI environment (which would require the additional bandwidth) would free up library resources to be able to directly support patrons – rather than trying to keep their environment up to date and secure.

Putting laptops or netbooks that are supported by VDI and wireless access at the libraries would maximize flexibility and service. Windstream, AT&T, Microsoft, Dell, and Cincinnati Bell Technical Solutions have all agreed and will partner on the project with us to make it a success.